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PATERFAMILIAS.

PEOPLE of all calibres of temper and understanding have criticised the nineteenth century. They have viewed it from their several stand-points, flattering and flouting, throwing mud or burning incense, as their ideas prompted them. My worthy friend, Professor Velox, has fine things to say in praise of this our epoch—it is, by his dictum, an enlightened age; a most humane, honest, generous period of progress; the fitting vestibule of a millennium of happiness and virtue. My no less worthy friend, the Rev. Laud Oriel, M.A., sorrows over the era—it is, he says, a cold age, heartless, covetous, unbelieving, without anything good or bright about it; a degenerate dwarf, when compared with the mighty centuries which we flippantly call the Dark Ages. And an enthusiast of another order, Danton Smith, that grim student of Mr Carlyle's, scorns the age for an age of shams, ridicules its pet theories, and longs for the advent of the coming man—Man with a great M, hero, stage-king, or demagogue, who is to make as short work of us pygmies as King Stork with the frogs.

But whether Velox, or Danton Smith, or Laud Oriel be right or wrong, or partly right and partly wrong, as more often happens when we mortals come to judgment, there is one aspect of the age which they all three overlook—it is a comic age. It may or may not fight better, or do more to feed the hungry and clothe the naked than its predecessors; but one thing it certainly does, and that is—to laugh. This is eminently a laughing century. No cynical laughter, be it understood; no sneering titter, like Voltaire's, in the midst of the mouldering pomps and frauds of old Europe; but a hearty, well-meant explosion of not unkind merriment. Our age can extract food for mirth from almost anything. It declines to accept transparent make-believe with the unquestioning gravity of elder days. No humbug, however solemn and pretentious, is safe from derision. Our grandfathers saw a monarch, for instance, through a cloud of royal splendour, a shimmering haze of gold and purple. The dweller in that glorified atmosphere might be hated, but could hardly be ridiculous. We have changed all that. With our modern spectacles, we see right through the radiant mist of prestige—right through the kingly lion's hide; and if we find a

long-eared, thistle-cropping animal masquerading in that regal guise, we laugh at him.

When kings and bishops are made the subject of mirthful comment, it is no wonder that Paterfamilias should be considered as fair game. At first sight, we may think that Thersites himself could not have made much sport of such a theme. Is it really a good joke that a man should be married, and the father of a thriving family? Is a wife so absurd, and are children so preposterous, that their presence should overwhelm an individual citizen with merited ridicule? Or are the true points of attack personal to Paterfamilias himself? We have all made merry over his portrait in *Punch*. We recognise him at a glance. By the sea-side, or asleep in his elbow-chair, or poring over bills in his invaded study, or blockaded by pyramids of luggage on the platform of some railway station, we instantly descry his familiar figure, which seldom fails to call up a smile. That bald head, those bushy whiskers, of the exploded 'mutton-chop' pattern, those broad shoulders, and that bewildered, anxious face, could not belong to any other than Paterfamilias. We know his dress even better than his features—the round-cut shooting-jacket for marine holidays, the baggy frock-coat for London wear, the dressing-gown which he is in the habit of draping around him like a Roman toga, the corpulent umbrella, and the respectable square-toed boots. No bachelor, of whatever standing, could possibly wear such boots, could tie his cravat in that flabby bow, or wear a hat so adapted for settling on the back of the head, throwing the organ of benevolence into fine relief.

But what absurdity is there in all this? Is it absurd to be fat, absurd to be middle-aged, to dress after the fashions of one's youth, and by the standard of one's contemporaries? Is it absurd to escort one's daughters to balls and concerts and sea-side piers, to hold conference with Materfamilias about household expenses or juvenile ailments, or to arch one's eyebrows over Miss Caroline's milliner's account or young Hopeful's shoal of college bills? If not, there would seem to be something wanton in the constant shower of shafts which are aimed at that broad target, the British family-man. For it is worthy of notice that Paterfamilias is always highly respectable. No scamp, no person of lax morals or irregular habits as to pecuniary transactions, is eligible for such an office. Whatever his faults may be, the typical Briton goes

to church, pays his taxes like a man, does his public and private duty, and is honest and open as the day, though a little testy and muddled of brain.

I strongly suspect that Paterfamilias, in thus appearing as Pantaloons on the grand literary and pictorial stage, unconsciously atones for the sins of bygone members of his own world-old class; for there was a time, and that not so very far distant, when Paterfamilias, so to speak, rode rough-shod over the world, and had his own way much more than is good for any of us. Think of the patriarchal system, as it flourished long ago, from Cathay to Connaught, and think how it must have worked. It had merits, of course, but it had the one great defect inherent in all despotisms, that everything depended on the character of the despot. It answered pretty well on a small scale, though with what amount of heart-burnings and smouldering, incomplete rebellions we can only guess; but on a large scale, mankind broke away to form feudal kingdoms, republics, anything but the big overgrown family where a master ruled over kindred slaves. Among the Chinese, even now, we find Paterfamilias in tremendous force; his colossal figure overshadows the Flowery Land. Its jurisprudence reflects his image; he is the key-stone of the state-creed in politics and religion, and an ingenious fiction makes the emperor the father of his people. If I, Chin, take a double first degree at the imperial university of Peking, if I fertilise provinces, cut off myriads of Taeping heads, or clear the seas of pirates, my children will not benefit by my rise in life. In China, the wise statesman or brave soldier does not leave a coronet to his offspring; he earns a mandarin button for his ancestors. A man's great deeds are rewarded by ennobling himself, his father, and any given number of grandsires, and the roots, not the twigs, of the family-tree are refreshed by the fountain of honour.

In Turkey, and in most Mohammedan countries, Paterfamilias is truly a sacred being. His sons dare as soon sit down in his august presence as in that of an unmuzzled lion. His daughters have no choice of their own as to marriage, and his wives can neither divorce, sack nor strangle, pretty much as his whim directs. It was in ancient Rome, however, that the paternal power attained its loftiest pitch. Paterfamilias, in toga and sandals, was indeed a household tyrant; his flesh and blood were his absolutely, *à vendre ou à prendre*. He had the power of life and death over his offspring—could inflict stripes, immure in dungeons, sell into slavery. His wretched sons never came of age at all, so far as independence was concerned, neither at twenty-one, as in England, nor at twenty-five, as in France; their nonage was perpetual. A grave Roman of threescore was, in the eyes of Quirinal law, an infant, if he had a tottering old parent of eighty, and was unemancipated. The only means by which a just or indulgent father could set his grown-up son at liberty from the overweening tutelage imposed by law, was to sell him to somebody else. A mock-sale was effected, a peppercorn price was paid, the son became the slave first, and then the freedman of a stranger, and presently budded into citizenship. But it was not only over sons and daughters that the master of the house bore full sway; by a pleasant fiction of the Roman code, his wife was regarded as his daughter, and as the sister of her own children, the better to exalt the dignity of her lord. Materfamilias was more a servant than a consort. If she abstracted the keys of the cellar, and indulged in a comfortable glass of Falernian, she was liable to the same punishment that Fatima incurred at the

hands of Bluebeard, and no Selim was likely to avert the scimitar-stroke from her neck. If her house-keeping was too expensive, her temper sour, or her person ugly, she was dismissed without the formality of an application to the Sir Cresswell Cresswell of the period. 'Restore the keys,' is a curt formula of divorce; but a wife, unless she were of a noble and powerful family, with uncles in the senate, equestrian kinsmen, and patrician brothers in high office, was more easily got rid of in old Rome than a maid-of-all-work in modern London. The middle ages saw Paterfamilias potent indeed, but a mere shrimp in comparison with his classic prototype.

The wonderful intricacy of the feudal system, playing as it did a kind of moral cat's cradle with the domestic and social relations, abated somewhat of paternal power. An old esquire, an old yeoman or trader, might have a knightly son whose golden spurs entitled him to sit at meat with emperors, and the accolade of chivalry put an end to the *patria potestas*. A lad who had become an aspirant to the honours of knighthood was transferred thoroughly from parent to master, and the heiress was wedded according to the good pleasure of her suzerain, not of her near kinsfolk.

But so late as the last of the Tudor reigns, children stood meekly before their parents, asked their blessing twice a day, craved permission to do whatever they fancied, and took cuffs and hard words with perfect equanimity. Such, at least, was the theory of the time, and the old chroniclers dwelt fondly on the good old custom of breaking the heads, not only of sons, but of daughters, with a corrective walking-staff, and on the monstrous profligacy of those young rebels who sat down unbidden in the presence of father or mother. There was, no doubt, a great deal of buffeting and lecturing on the part of the elders, a great deal of passive submission on that of the younger members of a family. But Master and Miss Goodchild were not ubiquitous, and it is probable that no radical change has taken place in human nature since then. Did not the Conqueror's sons, the sons of Henry II., the son of James III. of Scotland, and many others, levy war against their royal progenitors? Did not wicked Adolf of Gueldres imprison, beat, and cruelly maltreat the poor white-haired old duke, his father? There was more lip-service in bygone days, but perhaps not such a difference as to hearty reverence and honest affection as the Rev. Laud Oriel imagines.

When we get down to the Stuart reigns, to the Georgian reigns, we find Paterfamilias still rather a tremendous personage. His spouse and children paid him homage, even when his personal character suggested any other than reverential emotions. There was Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, that wild, wicked, clever courtier, he who outdid in sins and epigrams the maddest rakes of the time, and who died so meekly and repentantly at last with good Bishop Burnet praying at his bedside. Yet letters from his wife Katharine are extant, in which this man is addressed with adulation, with fond humility, and Scripture phrases, and a tone of pious respect—much such letters as a religious daughter might have addressed to a saintly parent. Was Countess Katharine a hypocrite, then? Or does History lie when she shews us the madcap earl reeling with drink, preaching mock sermons, masquerading as an Italian mountebank, or rioting in the suburbs? Neither, most probably; but Countess Katharine wrote as the *Complete Letter-writer* of her time dictated, and her faithless husband was canonised *ex officio*.

All through the last century, it was customary for well-bred persons to accost their father and mother formally as 'Sir' and 'Madam,' to beg their blessing before a journey, and to feign, or feel extreme deference for their judgment. To argue with a parent was regarded as presumptuous, and even sinful; and the

daughter who declined a consort of her mother's choosing, or the son who persisted in selecting his own profession, met with severe blame on all hands. Fathers clung to the horsewhip as a Palladium of authority, and mothers thought nothing of relegating a contumacious child of twenty or so to a locked-up chamber, bread and water, and Tillotson's Sermons. Then came our century and its innovations; down fell, with a great ruin, the discipline of the elder school; its wholesome maxims were forgotten or laughed at; the proverbial phrases it delighted in—as that 'Children should be seen and not heard,' that 'Little boys should not ask questions,' and so forth—fell flat upon the ear.

Come when you're called, and do what you're bid;
Shut the door after you, and you'll never be—

Pshaw! what rational infant of our day could endure such miserable doggerel! The emancipation of the nursery, like other emancipations, grew out of education and the progress of ideas. First of all, learning really did, as the Latin grammar tells us it will, make manners milder; secondly, instruction produced confidence. Parents began to respect their well-taught children, who seemed so much older and wiser than they saw their past selves, in the mirror of memory, at the self-same age. Children began to find out, with native quickness, that mamma and papa knew a good deal less of the 'ologies, of French irregular verbs, and modern history, than Master John and Miss Clara did. It was one thing for a son who could not spell to believe in the infallibility of a father who could not read; and another for little Tommy, who can tell how far off the moon is, and who has discovered the Georgium Sidus, and knows 'all about' galvanism and photography and the Indo-Germanic languages, and the zoophytes and algae, and much more, to respect the wisdom of a parent who does not know where the Zambezi river is, nor who the False Demetrius was, nor how to make collodion.

We therefore find children freely imparting facts to the authors of their existence, affably setting them right when their impressions are erroneous, and keeping the old folks well posted up in the latest discoveries, improvements, and solving of nature's problems. We find them volunteering their own opinions in the frankest manner, debating, arguing, and pooh-poohing the traditions of antiquity with a vigour which sometimes receives the stigma of 'flippancy.' The tide sets their way, and the world is with them. Our age is for truth, as opposed to authority, when the two principles clash. The consequences are curious. Did you ever notice the difference between Mrs Grundy of the preterperfect generation, born in 1790, let us say, and Mrs Grundy of a later date. The one sails about, magisterial and majestic, with her bevy of grown-up daughters, grown up long ago, alas! at her heels. They are old maids now, but she calls them the 'girls,' and they have the stiff angularity and starch of the school-room yet. They know little, and never learned to think for themselves, and mamma supplies them with dresses, ideas, pocket-money, and principles. The old lady is mistress of her own house, and never endured a contradiction in the course of her life, nor owned herself mistaken or wrong under any conditions. Now for modern Mrs Grundy, born too soon to learn the accomplishments of the age, but too late to be indoctrinated in the principles of divine right and awful supremacy. She is a poor bat, neither mouse nor bird. As she goes about with her daughters, she always reminds the bystanders of a hen with ducklings. The young birds will take to the water, while she stands clucking unregarded warnings on the bank. She is timid and nervous, her daughters are frank and decided, and have the courageous candour of the century, so different from the self-conscious bashfulness of old days. She admires them,

and is rather in awe of them, and they know it. Their Balmoral boots, sea-side jackets, plumed hats, and jaunty cloaks, the skill and daring with which they ride, or bathe, or play croquet, or draw the bow, or dance, their health and vigour, their accomplishments, command of foreign tongues, their taste for ferns, aquaria, and what not, scare the poor woman.

She does not command them, does not scold, but remonstrates gently, chaperones them, and goes about with them more like an elder sister of neglected education than as a family chieftainess, as was once the mode. She is not didactic, and is not much put out by being laughed at. Her sons treat her kindly, but would as soon think of asking her blessing, under ordinary circumstances, as they would of begging for that of the Rev. T. Sniffles, the new curate, who blushes when spoken to. Nobody, not even herself, values her opinion very highly. She is loved, but not esteemed an oracle, and I should like to see her bulky awful Miss Grinder, the prize governess. And how should it be otherwise? Forty years ago, women were valued for their most passive phases of character. Neutral tints were in demand. They were taught languor, drilled in cowardice, trained into helplessness. They played washy Italian or French airs on feeble-minded pianos; they wept over mawkish poetry; they took no exercise, and simpered insanely when a dandy came up to pay them silly compliments that a girl of our day would laugh at.

And Paterfamilias, how does he like the change? Will he, in case of one of those differences which occur in even the best regulated households, fetch the thundering old horsewhip out of its dark lair in the study-corner, and flog little Alfred, as his father before him flogged him when he robbed orchards or stole jam-pots? Certainly not. The very idea is absurd. Flog that bright, noble, little fellow in the black velvet knickerbockers, with those great, solemn eyes, and that bold, frank bearing, a true gentleman of three feet nine inches! For children have much improved, as well as the rest of us. Where, now, is the sulky, gawky, bread-and-butter eating Miss of fourteen, she whose pinafore, and awkward stiffness, and silent stupidity glare upon us from old scrapbooks? Where, too, is little Alfred's prototype, that incorrigible Master Tommy or Jacky in the ugly skeleton suit, or the crumpled frill and inky jacket, a boy at once shy and mischievous, troublesome and awkward, who could not answer a stranger, nor look a lady in the face, nor keep out of hot water? You might cane Tommy; he howled, but he was used to it; but little Alfred! upon my word, his honest face and truthful speech might have mollified Mrs Brownrigg; and besides, Alfred would no more steal apples or jam, than he would purloin John the footman's silver watch that he has left accidentally on the pantry-table.

Yet Paterfamilias has his moments of annoyance. His young son, of whom he is not a little afraid, he seems so old and wise, like a fairy elf changeling, sometimes treads on his corns, morally speaking. The junior now and then usurps the easiest arm-chair, pores over the newspaper when his elder wants it, contradicts the 'governor' a little too flatly, and uses odd expressions of Yankee origin, which his father can hardly comprehend. The youth's cigars, his dress, his latch-key, his bachelor-friends, his flights to Norway and the Nile, his politics and his practices, all jar with the traditions of bygone times. He respects his son, is proud of him, perhaps, but would prefer that he were of a different pattern. And he pays his bills when he can, and takes out his daughters to places of polite entertainment, and bears much good-humoured quizzing at need. Materfamilias is not on her knees to him any more; she has found him out, and is aware that he knows much less than the olive branches, and not so very much more than

herself. So they consult about ways and means, and are on terms of something very near equality, and for every six henpecked husbands there are some half-dozen who rule the roast at home. *Paterfamilias*, in general, bears his burdens and does his duty manfully and kindly. Not always. We all know some Sir Anthony Absolute, who quarrelled with his offspring till he succeeded in driving his sons out of doors, and in cowing the spirit of his daughters. We may every day see the testy old fellow go down to his club, drumming with his stick upon the pavement, and scowling defiance at society for jostling him. There are some men who drive away their sons quite naturally, as an old cock crows and flaps, and plies his spurs, until he has driven younger chantieers ignominiously out of the yard. This not seldom occurs when there is an entailed estate, and perhaps a title, which must, willy nilly, go down to the heir. There are many who grudge a son his enforced succession, who view him as an enemy waiting for their vacant shoes, and who spitefully try to starve him during their own lives. It is notorious that crown-princes are not usually on the best of terms with reigning majesty. The young man may really long and wish for the bright prize, and if he be never so disinterested, there are plenty to buzz suspicion into the monarch's ears—ah! the monarch's ears, or Sir John's, or those of Mr Mash the eminent brewer, or of Mash's foreman, for flatterers may beset the humblest, where a penny can be turned. But if the old gentleman really do awake from his lethargy to find Prince Hal trying on the diadem before the pier-glass, he may have some right to wince; only he should not believe his dear well-wisher, Backbite, too implicitly, when he says he saw the Prince thus engaged. I fancy that fewer of us long for inheritances than those from whom the heritage must come perhaps imagine.

These latter persons, these banishers of children, and enemies of their own flesh and blood, do not fairly count in the category. True *Paterfamilias*, blessings on his honest head, never does a cruel thing. He may chide, he may chafe, but he shares his last crust with wife and bairns; he may be puzzled to make both ends meet, but his children love him; and the tears that fall on his coffin when they lay him in his last home are none the less bitter and sincere than if he had been the most peremptory domestic autocrat that medieval Britain ever saw.

THE LOUNGER IN THE EXHIBITION.

THE NORTH COURTS AND GALLERIES.

THERE is one great advantage about the north courts, which will be felt more and more as the weather becomes warmer—they are better ventilated and less crowded than any other part of the building. The great opening to the Horticultural Gardens in the centre introduces a large supply of air, and the majority of the courts themselves do not attract what the philosophers call 'the vapid and irreflective.' Colonies generally are avoided by this class. Hardheaded, hardhanded, practical folks, on the contrary, frequent the colonial courts, with an eye perhaps to possible emigration. They discover objects of vital interest in Queensland, for instance (one of the most easterly of the north courts), which offers to the rest of the world only wines, wools, woods, and some very unpleasant-looking weapons used by the natives. In New South Wales, there is a very heterogeneous collection of products, including Alpacas born at Sydney (out of which are made the umbrellas of many unconscious visitors), models of towns, and sugar-plums. Emus and kangaroos are here exhibited of pure

Australian gold; as well as specimens of gold from the various auriferous districts. I met two gentlemen here disputing upon the various merits of Summer Hill and Abercrombie gold-fields, who inquired of me whether I had ever been to those localities, and could settle their argument. While I spoke with them, there came up a third gentleman, apparently a stranger to the other two, and joined in our conversation with much urbanity. The conclusion of the matter was, that this last individual invited us all home to his lodgings, where he had a particularly fine sample of Australian gold to dispose of at a fabulously low price. They were all most courteously pressing that I should make one of the party, and I consented to do so; 'only,' said I, 'I must be accompanied by my friend yonder—in blue—who, I perceive, is making his way towards us.' The evanishment of my three acquaintances at the appearance of the policeman was instantaneous.

One of the best arranged of the colonial courts is Natal, which is the very epitome of a colony, containing all things peculiar to itself, from its fruits to its travelling wagons. Its birds, shells, and butterflies are very beautiful, but its natives, pictures of whom were hung about the walls, are very much the reverse. In Western Australia, there are cabinets of sandal-wood very neatly executed by convicts, which excite the agricultural admiration. 'Deary me,' exclaimed one middle-aged lady, who, if my ears did not deceive me, came from the Vale of Berkshire, 'so they can be of some use even in prison, can't 'em? And all these little drawers comes open, I suppose—but don't you go a-pullin' on 'em, Mary Jane. And made o' scandal-wood, too, be they; well, that sounds odd, too, don't it?' There is some beautiful feather-work in this court which would charm the ladies of fashion if they ever ventured in this out-of-the-way locality—which they do not. There are some tables of curious woods in the New Zealand courts, but except these, this exceedingly bepuffed colony has little to shew. 'I never see Otago (which he pronounced Ought-to-go) advertised,' observed a curious 'rowdy' fellow whom I met in this place, 'and I see it advertised everywhere, but what I think of Ought-not-to-go. They'll never catch me emigrating nowhere; and cos why; I bin.'

In the Bahamas, there is some exquisite shell-work, specimens of pink pearl, and among its little list of practical products, some very good sponges. The medieval court has an appropriate gloom about it not ungrateful in these dog-days, and contains things curious and laborious enough, if not absolutely beautiful: intently decorated organs, funeral palls of appliquéd work; alms-bags, credence cloths, post-communion napkins, satin damask for dossels—whatever those may be—and every description of ecclesiastical upholstery.

It is impossible to particularise the various objects of luxury and comfort with which the furniture courts are filled to overflow. Those in the pavilion seem to attract the greatest crowds, and Collman's sideboard in oak, with the partridges and other game ready carved upon it, is perhaps the most favourite specimen. There are two other sideboards, however, north of the pavilion, which are well worthy of notice; the one illustrative of the plays of Shakespeare the other of the incidents in *Robinson Crusoe*.

The whole value of the department, entitled Western Africa (with the exception of some good cocoa-nut matting), might be represented by about

15s. sterling. Of the specimens from the Ionian Islands I have already spoken in deservedly disparaging terms. The articles exhibited are not more useful than those from other localities which are dowered with a too dreamy climate, while they are, in addition, vulgar and tawdry. The two next collections afford a curious example of the mixture of high civilisation and barbarism. Japan presents beautiful examples of inlaid work and carving, cocoons of the silkworm, and surgical instruments neither more nor less horrible to look at than those of Europe, in company with the most objectionable-looking idols. China exhibits ivory glove-stretchers exquisitely carved, and embroidery and needle-work such as neither Paris nor Brussels can outvie; but the autograph of its First Rebel Chief looks as if his nose had bled intermittently over a yellow pocket-handkerchief; while a much larger one of the legitimate emperor (given to Yeh for a supposed victory over the barbarians) has such an exceedingly free touch about it as to appear as if it had been executed with the elbow. The human skull mounted in gold, which formed portion of the spoil of the emperor's Summer Palace, is said to be that of Confucius, to whose mind, however philosophic, any presentiment of his appearance in the International Exhibition can scarcely have occurred. In the same court with China, there is a Siamese corner, wherein is exhibited the sword and opium pipe of the king of Siam, and some curious cases to preserve unbroken the finger-nails of ladies of rank. Music of all sorts is very abundant in this district, and adds much to the satisfaction of the visitor.

We have now reached the central avenue, wherein is the great case of Liverpool imports, admirably arranged, and offering raw material for much thought; and the vast statue of Shakespeare, by Thomas, which merits far more attention than it gets. In Turkey, there are a number of tantalising bottles, with 'wine of Lebanon, of Candia, of Tenedos' upon them, which suggest that the Mohammedan religion is a far less unpleasant one than has been represented. There are also sword-blades of Damascus, perfumes from Smyrna, pipes and cloth of gold, bridal veils, golden slippers, and furniture in general, such as one is accustomed to associate with the *Arabian Nights*. In Brazil, there is an excellent collection of mineral products, and elegant flowers made of shells and fish-scales—but why cigars, which only mock the lips without pleasing the eye; and above all, why ledgers and account-books? The number of these articles exhibited is generally, I observe, in inverse proportion to the solvency of the country which displays them. Under these circumstances, it will not be a matter of surprise to find a considerable quantity in Greece, which also shews some hard, bad pictures, stiff gold-lace, and a collection of cereals, rice, and wines. Venezuela contains filigree silver, charming feather-work, and models of fruits and flowers; just the things, in short, which one would have expected of her. There are countries male and countries female—the practical and the ornamental—and Venezuela is of the latter kind. In Peru, there are some very curious relics. Silver vessels from ruined cities, of the period of whose prosperity—when they 'flourished,' as the geographies have it—there remains no record; pieces of poncho cloth taken from Indian graves, no man knows how many centuries old; specimens of ancient sceptres, which lead us to imagine that Indian ink was the most precious substance the Peruvians were acquainted with; and an Inca's head, dried, which although not attractive to the European eye, is an object of worship when in its own country.

The Russian department, which we now enter upon, is one of the most interesting, because the most characteristic of the northern courts. We perceive here the products of that sort of industry which ministers to the tastes of the wealthy rather than to the comforts of the middle classes, or the necessities of the poor. We look in vain for much evidence of national wealth, but we find abundant proof of the riches and prodigality of the ruling class. The ornaments, the jewellery, the painted china here exhibited might have been made in Paris, except for their reckless disregard of cost: * the very books are flaming with barbaric gold and jewels, and among these is a New Testament which alone is valued at £475. There are also some handsome bells, which doubtless have had the advantage of ecclesiastical blessing, and an inconsiderable show of raw and manufactured goods. Norway and Sweden exhibit comfortable sledges, and certain vehicles called carioles, somewhat similar to those which in England are used for trotting-matches. The life-sized figures here, so brilliantly but cheaply bedizened, are not, as some visitors suppose, their majesties the king and queen of the country, but a Norwegian bride and bridegroom of the peasant class.† Among the most singular of the works of devotion in the building, there is in this court a series of illustrations of the life of the Saviour cut out with a pair of scissors, and among the books, a biography of Hedley Vicars in Norwegian. Denmark offers many doubtless admirable furs, the very look of which, however, causes the August visitor to perspire; cutlery of all sorts, surgical instruments, including some artificial leeches—which can be made to 'leave off' at pleasure without pinching their tails—and feather-work, some of which last makes up what its ticket calls 'A lady collar of Greenland's birds.'

The Swiss court is one great watchmaker's shop. There are watches of all sorts and sizes, ornamented in every possible way; watches set in bracelets, and decorated with sapphires, with garnets, with rubies; watches in snuff-boxes, set in gold or in pictures; gold hunting-watches so thin as to be contained within a crown-piece; and even watches in rings. There is the Universal Clock that tells the time not only at Brompton, but all over the world—at Peking, at Valparaiso, at New Orleans; and all this in addition to keeping a sharp look-out upon the calendar, and noting every month, and week, and day as it goes by. The mechanical singing-birds are also very sweet performers in this court, and attract more notice than ever did nightingale in wood; one of them, just as it has finished its little ravishing tune, is seized upon by a (mechanical) cat, to the openly expressed indignation of the juvenile spectators. Holland, without being at all brilliant (which was not expected of her), presents an appearance exceedingly comfortable and housewifely. She has substantial carpets and coaches; pulpits and *china*; liqueurs to conclude the evenings in a becoming manner, and wadded quilts. Belgium has furnished forth a tailor's shop of gigantic dimensions, which occupies a space that Art can little spare; but she has also several well-executed statues. In her war department there is a certain wheelbarrow which beats anything we ever saw in a pantomime for the multiplicity of its transformations, it being convertible into a camp-bed, an ambulance, a tent, a boat, or a bridge.

The gallery above the north-east transept does not demand any tedious scrutiny, its contents being principally stuffs and fabrics, and 'long spun yarns,' which certainly need not to be repeated here. The effigy of a gentleman in a water-proof suit—the whole costume to be purchased for nine shillings—is the

* Extravagant as their prices are, they have all got sold upon them.

† This misconception was strengthened when these effigies were moved into the Nave, to receive the Swedish awards from the Duke of Cambridge.

principal attraction here for males, as the artificial flowers and the Brussels lace are for females. Moving eastward, along the northern gallery, we pass through Belgium, whose painted windows gratify one sense, while its leathers offend another; through Denmark, of which the chief production appears to be lithographed blinds (misleading foreigners with the idea that the sun shines in that country); and through Switzerland with its raised maps, which attract at least as much admiration as they deserve. If the Swiss could not make raised maps, by what method, I should like to know, could even that ingenious people represent their country upon paper? The Dutch might just as well be applauded for making their maps of such a beautifully dead-level. Where there is little to praise, however, that little gets much belauded; and it is a melancholy fact that certain nations have used the northern galleries of the International Exhibition as a place where rubbish may be shot. Russia contributes a few good pictures, but more boots, besides a vast stock of Russian-American india-rubber, which only seems to differ from the ordinary sort in its more disagreeable smell. In Norway, there are some interesting specimens of Lap houses—made of flannel and sail-cloth; curious household contrivances used by the Norwegian peasantry; and some ploughs, which are simple enough compared with their astonishing brethren of the Eastern Annex.

The Egyptian collection is highly characteristic and interesting. There are a number of gold ornaments which, until lately, enhanced the charms of a mummy queen who reigned about 1910 B.C.—the Cleopatra of four thousand years ago. There are ivory carvings and rich embroideries; glittering but cumbersome horse-furniture, and saddles of surpassing splendour for donkeys and dromedaries; jewels made by the negroes of Soudan; exquisite pipestems; yataghans, and modern weapons, less picturesque but more effective, from the government manufactory at Cairo. Ecuador sends some pictures by native Indians, evidently copied from Roman Catholic altar-pieces. Next to this is a very dangerous court indeed, into which no prudent man will venture to take his wife—the court of Dressing-cases and of Travelling Bags. If I were to travel with any travelling-bag there purchased, I should think of nothing else until I got safe home with it; and in any case, of misadventure or delay, my first question would be always: 'Where is the travelling-bag?' my second: 'Where are the dear children?' Manufacturers should not be permitted to expose a species of goods at once so tempting to the female and so ruinous to the male, or, if the temptation be resisted, so calculated to shake the pillars of domestic peace. One method of defence, however, is for the husband to pass into the next department, that of Philosophic Instruments—and there to pretend to have a fancy for something pretty expensive, such as the Portable Laboratory for a Travelling Metallurgist, for instance. When the wife says: 'What nonsensical extravagance, Charles!' Charles can reply: 'Very good, love; only none of your gold-stoppered, Russia-leathered, ivory-mounted Companions for the dressing-table, my precious darling.' Among the wonders here is an Acoustic chair, ornamented with two gaping lions' mouths, through which—as through their prototype at Venice—the very deafest may listen to all that his relatives (under the impression that he cannot hear because he has not got his trumpet in his hand) may have to say against him. For deaf persons of the softer sex, there are auricles cunningly contrived in head-dresses and ornaments, so that the very artificial rose, into which you whisper your soft nothings, and the jewel that trembles at your fair one's ear, are mere acoustic apparatuses. There are worse kinds of surgical instruments than these, which it turns our blood cold to contemplate; while one corner of the department

is wholly given up to galvanic bands. Visitors seem as fond of trying these on, as of being weighed for nothing, or of getting gratuitous scent upon their pocket-handkerchiefs, but it is certainly a very shocking amusement.

Upon the bridge that leads from this spot to the refreshment-gallery is to be seen Peter's extraordinary contrivance for microscopic writing. To the naked and uninstructed eye, there appears nothing but a large-sized and rather blunt pencil making meaningless dots and marks upon a piece of paper; but by the magic of science, these strokes are transmuted at the top of the instrument into actual writing, quite legible indeed through a powerful glass, but so infinitesimal, that the whole Bible could thus be written out twenty-two times in the space of a square inch, and the Lord's Prayer three hundred and fifty-six thousand times in the same area. The machine writes slowly, and took, I was informed, two days and a half to transcribe the first chapter of St John. The uses of this invention will of course be very exceptional, but also very valuable, as in the case of secret dispatch-writing in time of war. A messenger might conceal the plan of a campaign under his thumb-nail.

Proceeding eastward, we come upon the stationery court, some of the contents of which are calculated to arouse some of the worst passions of the human breast: leaves from cheque-books that suggest forgery to the least imitative of mankind, and genuine notes—for from five to a thousand pounds—whose attractiveness is only marred by the one word *cancelled*, unpleasantly distinct in the right-hand corner. Among the examples of Printing, there are some that, to those who are ignorant of the Black Art of the Compositor, must appear not a little libellous. As illustrations of the various kinds of types used by different Companies and Institutions, there are the following:

'The messengers of Julian had been instructed to despatch with diligence the important mission intrusted to them; in their passage, however, they were detained in consequence of the numerous delays of the

LONDON MANCHESTER AND BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY.

Nor does the extract appear less insulting, when, in smaller type, it extends a little further:

'The messengers of Julian had been instructed to despatch with diligence the important mission intrusted to them; in their passage, however, they were detained in consequence of the numerous delays of the Provincial Governors, who caused them to be conducted to Constantinople by the most tedious

HAMMERSMITH LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION.'

The north-east gallery is monopolised by the products of India, and affords yet another example, of which there are so many in the Exhibition, of a land that has grown luxurious without becoming civilised; hookahs and inlaid sandal-woods; jewelled muskets and crystal-handled daggers; state parasols and golden trees—all these abound here: there is also much furniture, admirably carved by native artists, including a European piano sent out on purpose to be thus decorated by Madras workmen. The extreme north gallery running beside the refreshment rooms is mainly given up to saddlery and divers raw products; but at this eastern end of it there is a case worth visiting, that contains the current coins of all countries; there is also a model, exhibited by the Association for protecting the Fisheries, of the various apparatus used to destroy salmon, which makes us tremble for that surely approaching period when our favourite fish shall become unattainable by persons of moderate means. The Association, however,

assures us that with proper restrictions as to its capture, salmon might be so plentiful that its price in season ought never to exceed sixpence a pound—and that for the middle-cut.

BOOK-PRINTS.

On taking up a book for the first time, probably three people out of four will look to see if there are any pictures before reading a single page; and many will lay it down in disappointment, if they find letterpress only. To children, the pictures are by far the most attractive part of a book; and if the subjects are well chosen, a lively description of the engravings will give them the contents of the volume in the way most likely to fix their attention.

To give pictures of the figures, or similes by which a writer may explain his meaning or enliven an abstruse passage, is to illustrate an illustration, and such books may rather be said to be ornamented than illustrated. For instance, we take up Bacon's *Essays*; the frontispiece is a tolerable portrait of our great philosopher, and we feel interested in seeing how far that powerful mind is expressed in the head and face; but opposite, in a vignette, we see the rebel angels expelled from heaven. Our first thought is, that the print properly belongs to an edition of the *Paradise Lost*, and has slipped in here through a mistake of the binder; but beneath, we read: 'The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall,' and a reference to the page. Surely such a picture is neither characteristic of the essays generally, nor explanatory of the one referred to. It is much to be regretted that so little care is frequently taken in the selection of subjects, or in the treatment of them. The want of this leads sometimes to the most unaccountable blunders. In an old edition of Josephus, the brief but important mention of Christ as a wonderful person, perhaps more than mortal, is illustrated by a picture of his appearance to Mary Magdalene; but this is quite outdone in absurdity in the same volume by the honour paid to Simon the son of Giora, who is favoured with a picture of Peter's vision of the sheet knit at the four corners, most probably from an idea that this turbulent leader of the Jews was identical with Simon the son of Jonas.

The block-books, which were the immediate precursors of printing by movable type, were little more than wood engravings with a very short description of the subject, and were chiefly intended for the instruction of the ignorant and the young. Among them, the best known were the *Biblia Pauperum*, or Poor Men's Bibles, once popular as books of devotion. The wood-cuts were but poor works of art, intended to be coloured by hand. It is said that the engravers of the day refused to execute them, considering the art of printing antagonistic to their own.

Block-books were in use during the first three quarters of the fifteenth century. In their nature and intention, they were like the Dutch tiles—those quaint pictures of Scripture subjects, which this matter-of-fact age has given up without sufficient reason, for surely they might have been improved so as to keep pace with the advance of refinement. Among our most pleasant early recollections is the study of Jewish history by the glowing firelight, while the singing of the kettle gave promise of tea. In the larder, too, as well as the chimney-corner, they were pleasant to look upon; and to this day, the ascent of Mount Moriah by Abraham and Isaac, and the marvellous bunch of grapes borne on a pole between two of the returning spies, are closely linked in our memory with cakes, tarts, and fresh butter. Surely mothers have lost an excellent opportunity of instilling religious knowledge into willing minds by the disappearance of these little picture-tiles.

The first book printed in England with wood-cuts

was the second edition of Caxton's *Game and Playe of the Chesse*, printed by Caxton in Westminster Abbey about 1480. In the minds of many, the first pictures that can be remembered will be those in some family Bible of the last century, the fly-leaf of which contained, it may be, the names and dates of birth of their brothers and sisters, some of whom perhaps will never be recorded anywhere else. We well remember such a one with four pictures on a sheet, in which might be seen the Great Enemy of mankind tempting Eve or Job, with a tail and hoofs which we as firmly believed in as the sacred narrative itself. The tortures inflicted by Antiochus on the Jews make us shudder when we think of them to this day. As works of art, it must be confessed these Bible pictures would not be considered to rank high; but there was some rough energy about them, and their stories were clearly told.

The first book illustrated with copper-plate engravings was Bettini's *El Monte Sancto di Dio*, printed at Florence in 1477. The prints are much better than many that have been done in later times, and one of them is on the same page as the letterpress, a plan which, when introduced a few years ago, in Rogers's *Italy*, was thought a great novelty. The first English book with copper-plate illustrations seems to have been the *Concent of Scripture*, by Broughton, but the prints are rather diagrams or maps than pictures.

Until the end of the last century, book-prints were generally wanting in delicacy of tint and refinement of execution. There is scarcely an attempt to render the local colour; a light dress would have nearly the same treatment as a dark one, unless, indeed, the latter was nearly black; whereas, in the best specimens by later engravers, one may almost tell whether a piece of drapery is intended for red, blue, or brown by the distinction of tint and texture. In the earlier productions, the difficulty of handling the graver and etching-point is but imperfectly overcome, partly owing, perhaps, to the haste in which they were done at very low prices. There appears to have been a gradual improvement in book-engravings—and our remarks apply only to prints in books—till they reached their culminating point of merit, in what may be termed the golden age of illustration, and this period we are inclined to fix as including the last twenty years of the eighteenth, and the first twenty-five of the present century. During that period, there were many painters who made pictures or drawings for book-publishers, who seem to have been imbued with the true spirit for the work, and engravers were found who translated their pictures into black and white with great correctness and delicacy. It would be tedious to chronicle the names, or discuss the merits of all those who embellished with pictures such works as Bell's *British Poets*, the *Nordist's Magazine*, the *British Theatre*, &c. But our two great favourites, by whose standard we involuntarily test the merits of the rest, deserve, and shall have a short notice.

T. Stothard, R.A., is a name found below great numbers of little engravings, and what charming little gems they are! He has been called the English Raphael, and well deserved the name. His female figures especially are exquisitely graceful, and of a childlike, or, we should rather say, an angelic simplicity, for one could almost imagine that Stothard was favoured with visions of angels instead of being compelled to study from the marble figures or plaster casts that seem to have given their rigidity to the figures of Westall and others of his contemporaries.

But it is only in the engravings of James Heath that the beauty of Stothard's designs is perfectly preserved. In the work of this engraver, at least in his book-plates, for his style was not so well adapted to large engravings, we see correctness of drawing combined with a freedom of execution that nothing can surpass. The lines seem to flow just in that

direction, and with exactly the width between them which will best express the nature of the surfaces to be described. To those who, from the habit of comparing engravings together, have acquired the power of appreciation, there is an indescribable charm in the manner in which he twisted the lines about the folds of a coat, or the delicate, filmy white dresses of the ladies. The very angle at which his secondary lines cross the first and stronger row, is so well chosen, that the Heath-cutting, as it is technically called, is the model to imitate which most juvenile engravers are set; he is, in fact, the most classic of book-print engravers.

There is, too, a peculiar charm in the circular or oval shapes common to book-prints of this period. They were usually surrounded by an engraved border, which sometimes helped the story symbolically, but was principally of use in giving delicacy and refinement to the subject by the width between the lines, and the rougher texture of the surface. By the introduction of a little shadow on one side, the engraving was made to appear detached from the border, as though it had fallen upon it.

It is satisfactory to know that the works of James Heath are held in such esteem by the keeper of the prints in the British Museum, that he is now forming a collection of them, a distinction with which few engravers have been honoured. But while we confess to a predilection in favour of Stothard and Heath, we must not undervalue the merits of many others, of whom we will mention R. Smirke, a painter who was remarkable for the expression of his heads, and the powerful as well as pleasing arrangement of light and shade. He has illustrated *Don Quixote* in a manner which, if not in all respects equal to the illustrations of that fascinating work by his great rival Stothard, has at least the merit of being more Spanish.

Richard Cook exhibits such wonderful taste and skill in the many designs he has made from the British poets, that we cannot imagine how one who could paint so well could abandon the arts for many years before his death. The feeling he has displayed in portraying the heroes and beauties of Greece and Rome will always be admired, but we think never excelled.

It is time to say something of landscape, in the painting and engraving of which the English have perhaps surpassed all other nations. If, in the rendering of historical or fancy subjects, we have a right to expect care and thought, so in landscape the artist should give the literal truth when the picture represents an actual place; and even if it be one of those uninteresting things called composition pictures, it should at least look as if it might exist. Of course, in the choice of atmospheric effects, and in the introduction of figures, some licence may be allowed, but the first should not demand too much attention, and the last should be suitable.

As landscapes are portraits of places continually changing their aspect, they possess an interest for the antiquary. There are some hundreds of views in the *Beauties of England and Wales*, which, though very unpretending, and such as might now be thought coarse and rusty-looking, to our judgment are among the best engravings of their kind. There is a look of reality about them which would make us believe in them, even if we did not know how true they are to many spots we are well acquainted with. There is a freedom of execution and variety of touch which we may seek in vain in many highly finished prints of later date. Auld Scotland has not, we think, received due justice in the pictures of her far-famed localities which sometimes are joined to the work we speak of. There are also some views in Ireland—a set of twenty-four—engraved by Milton, which need no higher praise than that they have as much of the merits of Woollett's celebrated land-

scapes after Wilson as can be got into so small a space.

Now, just as mail-coach travelling improved till the invention of steam, so, about 1825, a discovery was made which caused a revolution in the art of engraving. This was the possibility of casting thin steel-plates, and softening them sufficiently to enable the graver and etching-point to act upon them. At first, this was considered an unmixed advantage, and, in a commercial point of view, perhaps it was; for a steel-plate would allow thousands of impressions to be printed from it, when the softer copper would only yield hundreds. The publishers could afford to give a larger price, hoping to be repaid by the extended sale. Again, a greater minuteness and delicacy of finish were possible on the harder material. A great impetus was given to the production of engravings. It will be remembered how the annuals sprang into a brilliant but ephemeral popularity—Keepsakes, Amulets, Bijous, and Books of Beauty rivalling each other in the beauty of their engravings and silk covers. Works such as Byron's Poems, Rogers's *Italy*, the *Waverley Novels*, &c., were brought out at a great expense, and yet proved very profitable speculations. Engravers had more work than they could execute, and took pupils to assist them, prices were high, and for a time all went well.

But at length a reaction ensued. Many of the annuals were little more than showy pictures, with trashy, insipid stories to explain them, thus reversing the proper order, in which the painter should follow the writer, and not precede him. As engravings on steel did not soon shew signs of wear, after illustrating one book, they were frequently made to do duty again with, if possible, a still feebler tale to drag in the position. Thus, we have seen Diana Vernon, and other heroes and heroines of Scott's novels, shewn up again in the most unexpected situations, to illustrate tales certainly not like Sir Walter's.

But in the material itself there were drawbacks. With no wish to decry the merit and exquisite beauty of many engravings on steel, we think much was lost by the change to so hard a material. The steel-plate being too nearly of the same temper with the steel tool that cuts its surface, the engraver works in constant expectation of the breaking of the point, which interferes very much with an easy and graceful execution. As regards landscape, too, we should perhaps surprise some by expressing an opinion that the influence of our greatest landscape painter has been prejudicial to the true interest of art. It is easy to see to what an extent his great and deserved success has influenced many who have looked at nature with a determination to see his effects of light and shade; and a tendency of this kind is more pernicious in representing the facts of nature, than the fictions of the imagination. This remark only applies to drawings made to be engraved, and so to enter into rivalry with prints after Turner.

But it is not at all with a wish to find fault with the art as it is, but rather to direct attention to a period in the history of book-illustration which has passed away, and of which the traces will each year become more indistinct. To speak more plainly: the copper-plate prints which we have tried to prove had a peculiar charm arising from the facility of their execution, were very limited in the number which could be taken from each plate: probably, after some three hundred were struck off, the finer lines were worn out, leaving a kind of glory round the coats, hats, &c., which, if dark, were engraved with stronger and deeper lines. And if we suppose three hundred to be the limit of tolerable impressions which could be printed, the bloom and beauty of some of the more delicate engravings would disappear with the first hundred. If to these considerations we add the effects of time, bad usage, the burning or other destruction of many of the books which contain these little

gems, it will be admitted that it is desirable that all who value what is beautiful in art should, according to their opportunity, help to preserve pictures, which, like the books of the Sibyl, must rise in value as they decrease in number. It is melancholy to think how many have been torn out of books to amuse children, who would have been better pleased with the coarsest-coloured picture. We do not at all recommend taking prints from books, even if the printed matter be unworthy of the illustration; but doubtless many little book-prints are lying about unvalued, or may be found in scrap-books in unworthy company, and their preservation is recommended to that numerous class who have always some pictorial hobby on hand. What more pleasing amusement can be suggested for a winter evening than the arrangement or mounting of these little treasures. The aid of a magnifying-glass of moderate power will be found of great use in tracing the manner in which the engraver has rendered the different textures, or indicated the distances of objects. Few people are aware of the taste and skill which are employed on engravings, the very perfection of whose execution leads to a general supposition that they are produced by some machinery, of what nature, few inquire. But it is to the sympathy and tender handling of the fair sex that we especially commend the graceful women and beautiful children which emanated from the pencil of Stothard, and were multiplied by the graver of Heath. Surely a collection of such engravings is quite as interesting as a cabinet of shells or of coins; and even in an antiquarian point of view, there is much that is interesting in the dresses of different periods, though, doubtless, the pleasing flow of the drapery is often due rather to the judicious treatment of the painter, than to the taste of the dressmakers and milliners of the day. Evidently, from prints of churches and houses, the antiquary may derive the most valuable assistance.

The passion for getting together engravings that bear on particular subjects has always prevailed to a considerable extent. Some have collected every print connected with their native town or county, whether portraits of eminent men or pictures of remarkable buildings. Sometimes books which were either scantly illustrated or not at all, have been rebound with blank leaves, on which everything is pasted that seems to bear, however remotely, upon the favourite subject. A most striking instance of this is seen in the fancy which seized some of the rich collectors of prints and books for getting together engravings of the celebrities mentioned in Granger's *Biographical Dictionary*. Some of these collections were carried so far as to be worth large sums of money—one, we remember, was sold for £300, after several of the most valuable prints had been taken out to be sold separately.

It may seem an unfortunate instance to give of the extent to which the passion for collecting book-prints may be carried, to mention a gentleman of good position in society who could not resist the temptation of stealing some engravings, which, upon a search, were discovered in a drawer, where they were kept to be seen by no eye but his own, proving that though a love of the arts may refine the taste, it will not make people honest. There is, however, just this drawback from the merit of collecting, that it does not—we fear it does not—tend to improve morality. Be it fossils or coins, or gems or pictures, or prints or books, or autographs, it certainly induces a grasping feeling, hardly compatible with a just respect for the rights of other people.

We have a remarkable instance of the effect of a work being well illustrated in Rogers's *Italy and Pleasures of Memory*; the poet-banker, being naturally anxious that there should be an attractive edition of his works, employed Turner upon the landscapes, and Stothard upon the figure-subjects. Their drawings

were put into good hands to engrave, and the result was, that the two volumes were so attractive as to find their way to many drawing-room tables, where poems of at least equal merit are seldom seen, and what was probably undertaken as an expensive fancy, proved a paying speculation. As we have mentioned, in these books the prints were on the same page as the letterpress, being engraved on large plates, so that the plate-mark might be cut off.

It is hardly enough to disclaim any wish to depreciate the merit of living artists in book-illustration; there is much brought out now that merits our warmest praise. The point to which wood-cuts have been carried, with a delicacy of tints which it might have been supposed the material on which they are engraved would not admit of, is a striking feature in thousands of books issuing annually from the press; and as the nature of the process admits of the picture being printed at the same time with the letterpress, the illustration or diagram may be brought into close proximity with the passage that requires elucidation. Wood engraving is seen to the greatest advantage in vignettes, where little or no background is required; but when it seeks to imitate engravings on steel or copper, its weak points are clearly to be seen, as a want of richness in the blacks, and of refinement in the lights.

From the time of the appearance of the *Pickwick Papers*, with their piquant sketches by Phiz, it has been the fashion to illustrate some monthly publications with etchings, probably because the process is quick and inexpensive; and for works of a comic character, no doubt they are admirably suited.

A somewhat more careful and finished style of etching has been used for works of a graver nature, in some of which great feeling and a strong appreciation of the author are displayed. We will only mention a volume of Tennyson's Poems, in which the poet's spirit is sometimes so embodied in the pictures, that one would almost think that, like another Admirable Crichton, he must have painted and engraved them himself. But these, while they have their meed of praise, are not our subject now; our business is with the dead, and the little time-stained scraps of paper which bear the impress of their genius—waifs and strays which may be lying about in unregarded corners, or sometimes sold for almost nothing at a book-stall. To your intelligent appreciation and tender handling, gentle readers of both sexes, we command them.

MY LANDLORD'S CUSTOMER.

'O PLEASE, sir, would you come down stairs, missis says? O please, sir, would you please be quick, for master's gone out of his senses, and we can't hardly hold him.'

It was little Emma, the tidy but very small maid-servant of the lodgings who thus addressed me, bursting quite violently into the trim first-floor parlour of 88 Regent Parade, Bubblewells Royal. I lodged in that favourite and fashionable thoroughfare, in the house of Abel Timms, tailor and outfitter, whose shop was below, and it was the Timms' maid-servant who had broken in upon the quiet enjoyment of my newspaper by the above startling request.

'What do you mean?' I asked, looking up from the Law Reports. 'What do you want to hold your master for?'

'He wants to kill hisself!' exclaimed the girl, and a terrific scream from the lower regions came to back her appeal. I tossed down the paper, and scrambled from my easy-chair with as much promptitude as could be expected from any quiet bachelor of fifty years' standing.

'Good gracious! this is really serious!' I exclaimed,

and ran down stairs. There I found Mrs Timms, a comely, kind-hearted young woman enough, very much out of breath, and struggling with her husband, who certainly looked desperate and excited enough to justify the small domestic's statement. My first idea was that the tailor, in general the meekest and most civil of little men, had been drinking, and perhaps beating his wife; but it was plain that I was mistaken. The man's lank sandy hair was tossed and tumbled over his sallow face; his eyes were bloodshot, and had a wild look in them; he had torn off his neck-tie and collar, and an open razor lay on the table near him, for the possession of which weapon the conjugal scuffle was evidently going on.

My arrival put matters on a more comfortable footing. Between us we forced Timms into an arm-chair, and held him fast, in spite of his kicks and inarticulate moans, until the paroxysm passed away, and the poor little man began to cry and sob like a child.

'I think we may loose him now, sir,' whispered Mrs Timms; 'but oh, thank you, Mr Parkes: I can't bear to think what might have happened if you hadn't been by.'

'Is he—is he often like this?' I asked in some perplexity, for I could not but suspect constitutional insanity, and there are pleasanter things in life than to be domiciled with a mad landlord.

'Never, sir, never before,' answered the woman with energy, 'we have been married three years, and a better, kinder husband than Abel never was, nor did I ever have a word of unkindness, never.' And here Mrs Timms put her apron to her eyes, and began to weep. All this was very embarrassing. A man who has passed the twelfth lustre, and who has never been married himself, is apt to have an almost superstitious dread of anything that looks like interfering in a matrimonial dispute. Besides, this is really not the kind of thing that one goes to Bubblewells for. I had enjoyed my sojourn, and derived benefit from the waters and country air; but the charm of the place would be destroyed if I were to be mixed up in domestic dramas with which I had nothing to do. Under the influence of these reflections, and seeing that the tailor's mood had changed from excitement to depression, I was for slipping off, when the little maid picked up a piece of paper from the floor, saying: 'I think, mum, master dropped this, please, sir.'

Now, Mrs Timms was of course the proper person to take cognizance of the document; but as she had her apron to her eyes, and as the small servant held the slip within eight inches of mine, I could not help seeing that it was a cheque, on regular bankers' paper, adorned with the proper copperplate flourishes and address, and that across the penny-stamp was written in a fine bold hand the aristocratic signature of 'Fitz-Fluke.'

'Bless me—Fitz-Fluke!' ejaculated I.

The name acted on the tailor with talismanic potency. He ceased crying, clenched his fist, and stretching out his arm with a gesture that would have been tragic if used by a bigger man, exclaimed in a voice of real pathos: 'That's him! that's the villain that's ruined me!'

I was thoroughly surprised. What!—Mr Fitz-Fluke—the Honourable Reginald Fitz-Fluke, of Eugénie Villa at Bubblewells, and of Park Lane, London—who had been caressed and respected at the watering-place, and whose departure I had just seen chronicled in the local newspapers! That Mr Fitz-Fluke was a customer of Abel's, I knew, for it was impossible to pass through the shop without seeing a brown paper parcel addressed to 'The Hon. Reginald Fitz-Fluke,' or a pair of silver-striped page's trousers, labelled, 'George Brown, Hon. R. Fitz-Fluke's, Eugénie Villa,' accidentally lying on the counter. Indeed, Abel was rather given to bragging of his noble customer, quoted the Fitz-Fluke opinions on all

matters of taste within the province of the needle and shears, and even dished up, for the entertainment of humbler patrons, the wondrous tales told by the Fitz-Fluke retinue as to the magnificence of the Earl of Canonbury, F. F.'s brother. And here was this very Abel Timms passionately proclaiming the Honourable Reginald a villain, and frantically accusing him of having caused his ruin.

Mrs Timms was a true woman; so long as there was any fear that her half-maddened husband would cut short his days by means of cold steel, she disregarded all his wild allusions to pecuniary losses; but as soon as it appeared that tears would be shed instead of blood, she remembered her two children upstairs, and winced at the word 'ruin' as a mother will. She therefore begged, in a hurried whisper, that I would be so kind as to stay and advise them, adding that she could not bear to be left alone with 'Mr T.' just then; and she sent Emma up to attend to the children, who very opportunely began to wail from the attics, and applied herself to extract an explanation from her husband. This was no hard task. The poor little man's nature had been stirred to its depths; he had been frantic and foolish, even to being tempted to self-destruction; but that fit was over now, and he was heartily sorry and ashamed. His wife had not the heart to scold him, though his abasement was perfect; and it was with sobs and a broken voice that he stammered out his story.

Fitz-Fluke owed him a good deal of money. He had been 'patronised' by the great man throughout the hunting season that had lately ended, and Abel had watched with delight the frequency with which the aristocratic name of Lord Canonbury's brother found its way into his ledger. At last, the Hon. Reginald gave up Eugénie Villa, and went away, and then Timms sent in his bill, with a deferential note of apology for that liberty. On the eve of his departure, Fitz-Fluke most handsomely paid the bill by cheque—a cheque drawn on those well-known and eminent London bankers, McNeesh and Dibbs of Charing Cross, and signed, stamped, and dated in the most formal way. As for the amount, that would have been a flea-bite to some tradesmen in my landlord's line. Schnipp and Ganzheim of Bond Street, or Crump and Slasher of Conduit Street, would have smiled as they set it down among the 'bad debts' of their portly account-books. But to Timms its loss meant beggary, and nothing less. That hundred and twenty-eight pounds, seven shillings, made all the difference between comfort and destitution to the poor little struggling man. The truth is, Abel had been rather too sanguine and ambitious when he gave up his snug post as foreman to the great tailor of Bubblewell, Old Edie, and set up in business in so expensive a quarter as the Regent Parade; and, above all, when he married, on the strength of his bright prospects. To be sure, Mrs Timms was a good wife and manager, and the first-floor apartments had hitherto let well enough to pay, or nearly pay, the rent of house and shop. But custom came in slowly, and coin more slowly still. It is all very well to stick up a glazed board in one's emporium, with 'Terms—Cash,' on it; but that harmless notice no more loses the purse-strings of the public than a scarecrow frightens sparrows. People *will* have credit for clothes; and it is one thing, as Abel ought to have known, to have money owed one in all directions, and to have the satisfaction of fingering the actual gold and silver. Fitz-Fluke, noble, dashing, and apparently rich, had descended on Abel's little sandwich of a shop like an auriferous Jupiter of the nineteenth century. He had been trusted, and had paid—paid by cheque; and he had gone away, bearing with him Abel's substance in various forms; in the liveries that clothed his page and footman; in the drab coat of his coachman, and the drab gaiters of his grooms; in the boxes and trunks of his family,

in the shape of riding-habits and juvenile jackets ; and even in the glossy coat that shielded his own Honourable shoulders.

The cheque had been presented by Abel Timms at the branch-office of the London and County Bank ; of course, they had directed him to endorse it, and had sent it up in their daily parcel to London, for transmission to the Charing Cross firm. Timms was to 'look in on Tuesday' for the money ; but on Tuesday, poor Timms, when he edged his way through the customers around the counter of the bank, got no money at all ; he merely received back the cheque, with the brief intimation that there were 'not sufficient effects,' and that there was one shilling to pay for postage, &c. Timms could not comprehend the dreadful truth at first. The clerk briefly enlightened him thus :

'Not sufficient effects—that means that the drawer of the cheque had not a sufficient balance in their hands—McNees and Dibbs, that is—to meet the draft. He has a balance, but not enough ; and they didn't care to advance, I suppose. He should be more careful. One shilling, please.'

Timms paid the shilling, and left the bank, catching at the idea of a mistake. He would write that very night to the Hon. Keginald, and explain the error into which his distinguished patron had inadvertently fallen. Yes ; he knew the address in town, the number of the house in Park Lane, and he would write. As he was cudgelling his brains, however, to find sufficiently civil terms wherein to jog his customer's memory, he ran against an acquaintance, Grundy the confectioner, who came hurrying along in a towering rage, with a paper in his hand.

'Hullo ! Timms !' cried the angry Grundy, 'here's an infernal business. We're all lit in for the amount of our bills, I do believe, by that Honourable humbug, Fitz-Fluke. Here's his cheque for a hundred, seventy, ten, coolly handed back to me across the counter of the National Provincial, with "not sufficient effects" for all explanation. A pretty go ! I've been supplying Eugenie Villa all through the winter with ball-suppers, extra-made dishes, and all sorts of goods—even the boys, hang 'em, ran up quite a long-chalk for raspberry-tarts and sweet stuff ; and the cheque, that I thought as good as a Bank of England note, comes back on my hands like a bad half-penny. But he shall smart for it, if there's law in England.'

'Mayn't there be—some mistake ?' gasped Timms, turning quite white and ghastly. The confectioner thought not. Miles, the grocer, had been similarly duped, he said, and so had the saddler, Silvertop. It was a clear case, Grundy thought. Poor Timms went home like a wretch pursued by the Furies ; a mocking voice seemed to pour dark counsels into his ear, and bid him despair and die. His heart within him was heavy as lead. What was a mere inconvenience to the richer tradesmen, to Silvertop, Grundy, and Miles, was to him a crushing blow—a total smash. He had been imprudent, relying on Fitz-Fluke. He had given a bill at three months to Thrum and Salter, the clothiers, with whom he had dealt on credit. This bill was for eighty-eight pounds. It would fall due very soon ; and it could not be met, and the unlucky tailor knew well that no mercy could be expected in that quarter ; he should be sold up. So, daunted and maddened by the gaunt spectre of destitution suddenly evoked, Abel lost his wits for the time, and, but for his wife's opportune entry into the room where he stood, bare-necked, opening the razor, would have actually given one sensation-paragraph the more to the newspapers, and have offered himself a bleeding victim to the perfidy of Fitz-Fluke. No more fear of that now ; the poor little man was calmed down from the momentary fever-flush, though it was piteous to hear his moans as he dwelt upon his wrongs.

'I trusted him, sir, as if he'd been a dook. He's served me cruel ; and I was uncommon moderate,

too, in my charges. I can take my oath of that, and particular in the items. What with button-toonies for the page, which his name were George, and state liveries for the footman and coachman—the plush bein' alone six-and-ninelpence a yard—riding 'abits for the young ladies—'

'O dear, I can't stand this,' I murmured to myself ; and whispering a promise to Mrs Timms to think the matter over, and advise her to the best of my ability, I went upstairs to my own sitting-room. But in an hour there came a timid tap at the door, and Mrs Timms arrived to tell me the tale more succinctly and clearly than her bewildered spouse could do. Matters were evidently going ill with the young couple. Abel was such a minnow among the Tritons of trade, that a very little sufficed to put an end to his commercial existence. He had but little custom ; and even if he were to affront all his supporters by dunning for his due, he could not hope to meet that bill of Thrum and Salter. That bill was the Fate looming in the distance, the anaconda to eat up the Timms family, body and bones. Without Fitz-Fluke's money, he could not face the day of payment. An execution, clearing the house of furniture and lodgers, clearing the shop of cloth and trimmings, was imminent, and then Abel's career would be nipped in the bud, and the transition to the workhouse be rapid indeed. He could be a journeyman, no doubt, but ah ! what a tumble for the pride of one who had been a master—a merchant-tailor ! All property must go ; the name of Timms must be in the Gazette ; the body of Timms might even be lodged in jail for debt. 'Mr Thrum is a hard, stern man, sir,' said the poor wife, 'a hard man indeed. And the poor children—oh, it is for their sakes I feel this ruin.'

There was genuine grief in her look and tone ; and though she was no elocutionist, and did pronounce the last word of the above sentence 'ruin,' I did not feel at all disposed to laugh. A good creature she was—they were both good creatures. I had been well treated in their house ; my joints had lasted their normal time, my sugar-basin and decanter had not been poached upon, and the cat had never glutted its appetite on any of the viands I had laid in for my own consumption ; moreover, the attendance had been good, I had been nursed through a spell of the gout, and Abel had most heedfully 'finedrawn' a rent in my favourite coat. What more could a reasonable lodger look for ! Decidedly, I had every reason for wishing well to the Timms *ménage*. I think, but am not certain, that my landlady had a faint hope that I might perhaps cut the Gordian-knot by advancing the sum due to the clothiers ; there was a wistful glance of Mrs Timms' eyes that seemed to hint as much, and she lingered and lingered, and nervously tied and untied her apron-strings, and appeared anxious to say something that would not come trippingly off the tongue. Poor woman, I am glad she did not put her wish into words, for to refuse would have been painful, and, as for paying the money, it was out of the question. A man with four hundred a year, less the income-tax, with expensive chambers in the Albany, with club-subscription, doctors to fee, charity-dinners to attend, and sea-side and mountain trips to provide for, cannot afford to sign away almost a quarter's income at one scrape of a pea. Sincerely I wished I could allow myself the luxury of being generous, but it would never do. Eighty-eight pounds ! quite out of the question—quite !

'Mrs Timms,' said I, 'I really feel very sorry for you—on my word I do. But it's a difficult matter to set straight. From what you tell me, I begin to fear that this Mr Fitz-Fluke is some artful swindler, victimising the public under a borrowed name. Should this be so, he is probably known to the police ; and as I am going to run up to London to-morrow for a couple of days, I will go to Scotland Yard, and

enlist the services of a detective. It is likely that so superior a knave as this would prefer impunity and a mulct, to Millbank and oakum—would pay the cheque, I mean, rather than go before a magistrate.'

So saying, and bidding Mrs Timms be of good cheer, since nothing could be easier than to track so ostentatious a fugitive, I somewhat hastily took my hat, and went out, for the landlady's thanks were slightly hysterical, possibly as much from disappointment as an excess of gratitude.

'And yet,' said I to myself, as I turned into the High Street, 'I may be on a false scent after all. If that Fitz-Fluke were really of base metal, an electro-plated counterfeit of rank, he would surely have been detected before. Bubblewells Royal is full of experts. There's that old Miss Scraper has the whole Peerage by heart, from A to Z, and knows the names, weights, and colours—no, I mean the ages, marriages, and circumstances of all the Honourables there enshrined. And Mrs Pryor has the history of every titled family at her finger-ends. Had he been an impostor, he never could have got with credit through the ordeal of our Bubblewells assemblies; and I know he visited at the best houses.'

Then my memory recalled the image of the Honourable Reginald, a fine portly man with gray whiskers, a florid complexion, and a fresh, jolly face, and voice to match. I had seen him in pink and mahogany tops, riding out to the 'meet,' and back from the hunt—seen him driving tandem, swaggering in and out of the shops and library with a pleasant word and a laugh for everybody—seen him at billiards, whist, balls, and dinners; and he had always seemed a gentlemanly jovial person, rather of the sporting order, but good-humoured to even the humblest. Mrs Fitz-Fluke, to be sure, was a thin, sad-eyed woman, with rather a scared face and silent manner; but the young ladies were handsome, dashing girls; and the boys, fine little fellows in velvet knickerbockers and absurdly smart tunics. If Mr Fitz-Fluke were no Fitz-Fluke at all, but some Brown or Jones masquerading in a heraldic hide, all I could say was that the pretender must be a man of talents far above Cagliostro himself. Wherever I went, I found the same opinion prevalent. News flies fast in such a place as Bubblewells, and every one I saw knew perfectly well that the Honourable Fitz-Fluke had tricked his tradesmen. Some were scandalised at the fraud, some chuckled over it, others hardly declared that it was no more than they had always expected; but no one appeared to dream that their departed acquaintance was an impostor. One or two of the more lenient ventured to hint that the whole affair might be a mere blunder—an inadvertency on the part of the noble debtor—but they provoked almost as much derision as I did when I hinted my doubts as to whether Fitz-Fluke were Lord Canonbury's brother after all. My expressions on this head were very ill received, being taken as an affront to the understanding of the community, and I distinctly heard Mrs Pryor whisper to old Lady Larkings: 'Poor Mr Parkes! If he knew a little more of good society, he would not make himself so ridiculous. Mr Fitz-Fluke an impostor!—preposterous!'

Nevertheless, when I went up to London on the following morning, my thoughts set steadily towards unmasking a rogue, and I began to feel a sensation of pique mingling with my sympathy for the tailor's wrongs. I say the tailor's, partly because Timms was my landlord, and partly because the grocer, pastry-cook, and saddler were all much better able to bear the loss sustained by them. Timms was my only client; I was not Quixote enough to champion any other creditor of the too fascinating Fitz-Fluke. However, I resolved to act warily, and therefore I called upon my solicitor, previous to taking any more decisive steps in the matter. Mr Marshall was an old friend; he had given me briefs in former days, before I succeeded

to my slender patrimony; and he received me cordially. The keen old lawyer knit his beetling brows as I told the history of Fitz-Fluke, and he scrutinised the protested cheque which formed my credentials—and with which Timms had provided me before starting—as curiously as a connoisseur scans an antique medal. Then Mr Marshall consulted a dingy copy of the Peerage, and one of the Blue Books, which were squeezed in among the calf-bound folio Acts of Parliament on his dusty shelves, and enunciated an opinion.

'My dear sir, excuse me, but I really agree with those Bubblewells people you tell me of, that Mr Fitz-Fluke is the real Simon Pure, and no sham; and so much the worse for your poor little landlord. Don't you see that a professional Jeremy Diddler might be frightened into paying the tailor, whereas Fitz-Fluke can snap his fingers in the face of A 99. It is only a simple contract debt, and as there is no legal offence—'

'No legal offence!' interrupted I: 'why, to give a cheque on a bank where a man has no effects is felony.'

'Yes, felony, according to Lord Cramham, but misdemeanour by the more recent ruling of Baron Ponder and Chief-justice Patchley,' said Mr Marshall, taking snuff; 'and although I grant such an act is severely punishable, the law does not appear to stretch to such a case as this. Fitz-Fluke *had* effects, you see; he had a balance, and he overdrew it, that's all. A judge might reprove him for carelessness; but I don't think a jury could send him to work on the Portland breakwater, richly as he deserves it. A very ingenious trick, Mr Parkes—very.'

But when the good old lawyer understood that I was really determined not to let the matter rest, he changed his tone.

'Now look here, Mr Parkes,' said he; 'you ought to know the ins and outs of law as well as I do, only I'm in harness yet, and you are out of the shafts long ago. To sue Fitz-Fluke, and put in an execution, or take his person—he's not an M.P., is he? (again consulting the Peerage—is the only regular course, and it won't serve our turn. Much delay, large costs, and your poor tailor in the Bankruptcy Court long before we get a man in possession of Fitz-Fluke's veneered sideboard and electro-plated cruet-stands. Don't sue him, then. Don't go to the police; they are all but useless in such a case. I've got a clerk worth any ten of those private detectives that advertise in the *Times*. I always employ him in any difficulty like this—will you stand a five-pound note as his fee?'

'I will,' answered I.

The lawyer rang the bell. 'Send Mr Lobb here.'

Mr Lobb came—a thorough-paced attorney's clerk of the more subtle and tragic order, no light-comedy clerk in tartan trousers and Magenta neck-tie, but a tall, thin, youngish man, with a smoothly shaved dark face, straight black hair, shabby clothes, and a look of intelligent desperation. You could see that the man's brains were active and fiery behind his furrowed forehead, and that all he lacked was opportunity. Very soon he knew as much about the case in point as his employer or myself.

'I'll try,' said Mr Lobb, entering the particulars with a stump of a pencil in a greasy black-bound pocket-book.

'When can you let this gentleman know what you have discovered?' asked the solicitor.

'This time to-morrow,' answered his clerk, who was the reverse of deferential in his bearing, and opened and shut his thin lips in speaking as sharply as if they were the jaws of a rat-trap.

'If Lobb can't find out the truth, and a plan to go on, nobody can,' said Mr Marshall, as we shook hands and parted. On leaving the solicitor's, a thought

occurred to me—I would go straight to M'Neesh and Dibbs. I went, found the bank easily enough, pushed open one of the heavy mahogany swing-doors, and elbowed my way through the numerous customers up to the nearest counter. The moment a clerk was at liberty, I thrust my cheque—Timms's cheque—in his face, as if I had been a highwayman presenting a pistol.

'Short, if you please,' said I; 'a hundred, a twenty, and gold.'

The young man grinned contemptuously as he scanned the document. Wonderful memories bankers have, to be sure.

'I've seen this before; it was returned to the London and County. Effects not sufficient. Can't pay it.'

I ventured to remonstrate, hinting at a mistake, but I might as well have tried to pump the sphinx.

'A great shame,' said I, 'and inflicts cruel hardship on a deserving family.'

But the clerk was already paying down showers of sovereigns to somebody else. When he had finished, I attacked him again.

'Could you oblige me by telling me the actual amount of Mr Fitz-Fluke's balance?' I felt the last syllables drop falteringly from my lips, so impressive was the stony horror and incredulity in the clerk's eyes. He could not have been more shocked if he had been a Rosicrucian asked in an easy manner to blab the arch-secret of the order.

'We never mention the state of a customer's account,' was all the reply I could elicit, and of course I had to retire. I strolled to Park Lane. Yes, there was the house, and a baker's boy whistling a few doors off told me Mr Fitz-Fluke really lived there. It was not a house of very promising appearance, being narrower and older than most of its haughty neighbours, and having an air of mouldy neglect, as if it wanted fresh paint, fresh brass and iron, cleaner windows and curtains, and a general touching up. I walked up and down the pavement once or twice, then ventured to knock. A footman opened the door a very little, first putting up a strong short chain that rattled hoarsely. Evidently the garrison were on their guard.

But my call was useless. Not only Mr Fitz-Fluke was not at home, but I could not glean the scantiest information as to any probable time for seeing him. The footman was surly and suspicious, and presently shut the door with a slam. My hopes sank to zero. Fitz-Fluke was a rogue, no doubt of it, but not one of those conventional rogues whom policeman X can manipulate as if they were pats of butter, and mould to his will.

That night my dreams were haunted by the tearful images of the tailor, his wife, and the two children, dressed in rags, and singing doleful ballads through the streets. My thoughts, when I woke, were still more dismally prophetic: Timms in a debtors' prison, Timms learning rackets, gin-drinking, and the rudiments of rascality; Timms converted into a tipsy little scamp, beating his wife, and neglecting his family; Mrs Timms in tatters, and a black eye; the children dying, or running wild among the Arabs of the streets—such would be the probable results of the Honourable Reginald's financial stratagem.

At the solicitor's I found Mr Lobb, charged with information. It so happened that the old lawyer was very busy, and the clerks' room not being adapted for polite converse, we salled out to talk as we walked along. The clever clerk was more loquacious than on the previous day.

'I thought I'd reconnoitre the enemy a bit,' said Lobb, 'and work up to him by degrees. The Blue Book told, you know, what club my gentleman belonged to, and so, as I happened to know a party connected with the refreshment department there—'

'A waiter, do you mean?' asked I, much amused.

'Why, yes,' said Lobb demurely, 'he is a waiter. But we belong to the same free-and-easy in Birding's Rents, and I knew he was off duty, being in the doctor's hands. He gives the exact account of Fitz I thought he would. A cunning old chap is Fitz, and my friend's heard of plenty of tricks of his, worse than this, and the gentlemen say it's a pity he wasn't black-balled years ago.'

'But is he an Honourable?'

'In a certain sense, he is,' answered Lobb dryly; 'better known than trusted, though. He's had little but his wife and his name to live on these twenty years; but he's as bold as brass, so it's useless to try to bully him. I know a trick worth two of that, but it wants money to work it.'

'How much?' asked I nervously. I would have done a good deal for the poor young folks at Bubble-wells, certainly, but paying money is a crucial test.

'No bony-fide spending,' returned Lobb, who had probably felt me wince as we walked side by side, 'only a loan for about ninety minutes or so. The sum wanted is thirty-one pounds, twelve shillings, which will be returned in an hour and a half.'

'Is that all?' said I, with a sigh of relief.

'Yes,' returned Lobb, 'barring five bob, which perhaps you wouldn't be particular about. That's for commission.'

But Lobb would not reveal his scheme; he merely said that if I would intrust the above-mentioned sum to him, along with the cheque, he would guarantee a satisfactory result. This was tantalising; but Lobb was a clever fellow, and had his employer's good word. I went with him, therefore, to my own bankers', drew out some money, and handed over six five-pound notes, one sovereign, and two half-crowns, to my mysterious ally, who pocketed them with a grim smile. Then his countenance changed.

'Mr Parkes,' said he, 'I ain't playing with you in this; I'm doing my best, but it must be in my own way. Will you let me be fugleman, just for two hours, without a word of remonstrance or complaint, no matter how odd my behaviour may seem?'

'I will,' said I; 'I put myself entirely into your hands for the time specified.'

But certainly Mr Lobb's proceedings were of a nature to try my equanimity. After dragging me to the Polyandron Club, where he civilly asked the porter whether Mr Fitz-Fluke were within, receiving an answer in the negative, he next hurried me off to Charing Cross, making an evident point for the banking-house of M'Neesh and Dibbs.

'What are you going to do?' I asked, irresolutely hanging back as my companion gave a push to the well-remembered swing-door. Lobb put his finger to his lips, by that mute sign reminding me of our compact, and in the next moment we were within, and standing at the counter. A clerk stepped up to ask our business; it was the same clerk who had refused the cheque. He remembered me, and his eye was unfriendly, and his voice testy.

But Lobb thrust himself forward, and drew the bank-notes rustling from his breast-pocket.

He had come, he very glibly said, to pay in a sum of money to the account of a customer of the firm—and I could hardly believe my ears when he added in a business-like way, that 'the name of the party was Fitz-Fluke—the Honourable Reginald Fitz-Fluke.'

I quite gasped while the cashier made the entry and gave the usual receipt for the money. Had Lobb gone suddenly mad? Was he bought over by the enemy? Here he was, actually gorging the voracious maw of the devouring dragon, Fitz-Fluke, with further spoil, in place of tearing from him his former prey, the substance of poor Timms. And I, I had not the moral courage to snatch up the bank-notes from the counter, but passively allowed the clerk to count them, flatten them, pin them, and put them in a drawer. Nor was

it till we were outside the door that I turned upon Lobb, and asked whether he were insane or not. Lobb chuckled. 'Remember our bargain,' said he reprovingly; 'and trust me for the rest. Now, if you will make the best of your way, in a Hansom, to Park Lane, draw up some three doors off Fitz's house, and keep a sharp watch for his coming out, it's all I can ask of you. Don't be caught napping. If he comes out, follow him; and if he turns Charing Cross way, make your cabby gallop like mad to the Golden Cross Inn, and you'll find me in the coffee-room.'

'But—'

'But me no buts, as the man says in the play,' answered Lobb; 'but keep a sharp eye on old Fitz. By the by, let me have that cheque, as agreed,' half wresting it from my reluctant hand. 'Here, jarvey, cabby, pull up, will you?'

And the active fellow almost hustled me into the high-wheeled cab.

'What am I to do if Fitz, as you call him, doesn't shew?' I asked, half restored to confidence by Lobb's air of cheerful determination.

'Go to the governor's office, and I'll soon be with you—in an hour and three-quarters,' hallooed Lobb as I was wheeled off.

I cannot say that my share in the business appeared one wholly satisfactory to human vanity. There was I, watching Fitz-Fluke's door, like a cat watching a mouse, if such a simile be pardonable in such a case, when I was a mere tool in the hands of a mysterious fellow-creature, and as free from intelligent participation in the intrigue as the very horse in the shafts before me. There I sat and fretted for the specified hour and a half, watch in hand, but no signs of the illustrious defaulter were visible. At the end of the time, I drove off to Mr Marshall's, and had hardly finished my altercation with the cabman, who wished to be paid on some aesthetic principle, rather than in accordance with the base tariff drawn up by grovelling commissioners of police, when Lobb came up breathless and flushed, evidently with triumph.

He fairly pushed me into his employer's private room, and recklessly tore open his tightly buttoned, threadbare coat, to dive into an inner pocket.

'There!' cried he, flinging on the table a roll of crisp new notes—'there. Ten tenners, see, that makes a hundred; five fivers, that tots up the amount to a hundred and twenty-five; three golden sovs—and seven shillings—there's the money for your tailor's cheque—one hundred and twenty-eight pounds, seven shillings—much at your service, Mr Parkes. I told you five bob would go for commission.'

'But how in the world did you?' began Mr Marshall and myself, but Lobb cut us short by exultingly narrating the events. It seemed that one of the junior clerks in the bank of McNeash and Dibbs, a raw boy from the country, and prone, as many boys are, to believe himself more knowing in turf-matters than his elders, was under obligations to a friend of Lobb's. These obligations turned out to consist in the fact, that the silly lad owed Lobb's friend, who was a livery-stable keeper's foreman, certain small sums for bets lost on races, dog-fights, and pigeon-matches. These the young clerk was liquidating by instalments from his salary, while waiting for 'a turn of luck,' and meantime was much under the influence, 'under the thumb,' Lobb phrased it, of his elder associate. For the bribe of a sovereign, Mr Curbett agreed to 'put the screw' on his young debtor, and to enjoin him, under pain of excommunication from the enchanted limits of the sporting-world, with all its 'tips' galas, oracles, and joys esoteric and exotic, to take a sly peep into the books of the banking firm, and divulge the exact condition of Fitz-Fluke's account. This was done; and Lobb, wisely conjecturing the Honourable Reginald only kept up this balance as a decoy-duck useful in his dealings with tradesmen, formed the hardy idea of first augmenting the sum to

the desired amount, and then, to use his own words, 'netting the whole nest of goldfinches.' This was done. The thirty-one pounds, twelve, paid in at one o'clock to the credit of Fitz-Fluke, made up his account to what was needed; and there were no grounds for refusing payment of the often-rejected cheque in behalf of Timms, when Mr Lobb blandly handed it over the counter at half-past two.

Lobb received his well-earned fee, as well as all expenses incurred in the matter; and at six that evening I started by express train for Bubblewells, to hand over the money to Timms, and was received by the family with transports of gratitude which, as the papers say, can more easily be imagined than described. At any rate, the wolf that had peered, gaunt and snarling, in at the tailor's door, was driven away, and the ruin of two worthy people averted.

As for the wrath of Fitz-Fluke, when he learned the truth, I can only say that I wish I had been by to witness it.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MANY of our savants are taking advantage of the holidays for fresh explorations of the Alps, and renewed observations of the glaciers, and several are going to pay particular attention to the margin of the Swiss lakes, in hopes to discover further traces of the ancient inhabitants whose houses were built on piles over the shallow water.—In connection with holidays, the weather has of course been an important subject, and our English climate has had to bear more than its usual share of reproach. We have, however, only partaken of a state of things which appears to have been common to the whole of Northern Europe: from Petersburg, amid exciting political news, we hear that an October temperature prevails; at Berlin, Whitsunday was hot and summer-like, but after that the weather became cold and windy; Denmark tells the same tale; and it is only when the traveller gets to the foot of the Pyrenees, or beyond the Alps, that he finds real settled hot weather. April was a fine warm month in England; but in Pennsylvania there fell twelve inches of snow between the 8th and 10th.

We find in the report of Admiral FitzRoy's lecture delivered at the Royal Institution some interesting particulars concerning the application of his storm-signals. Some objectors urge that the expectations formed of the weather may be erroneous, and that to suspend a journey or a voyage, or to put off outdoor operations because of a storm that might never happen, would occasion loss as well as inconvenience. The admiral answers that his signals are only intended to be cautionary, to excite vigilance, and to denote anticipated disturbance somewhere over these islands. As a rule, the disturbance may be looked for within three days from the time of hoisting the signal; meanwhile fishermen and others along the coast are to *Be on their guard, and Notice their glasses and signs of the weather.* Of course, infallibility is not to be expected; but these 'forecasts' have already been instrumental in saving life and property, as may be understood from a few instructive examples, which we present in Admiral FitzRoy's own words. 'A gentleman intending to cross the Irish Channel with an invalid lady, was warned to *wait*, though the weather then looked beautiful in London. That night it blew a hurricane on the west of Ireland, and a gale in the Irish Sea, which lasted the following day.—On the 12th November,

a warning was sent to Yarmouth, in the afternoon. Being nearly dusk, and having then no night-signals, nothing was done till next day, *after all* the fishing-boats had gone far out to sea, they having started very early in the morning. That afternoon, there was a storm; and, to save their own lives, the fishermen were obliged to cut from and abandon some £40,000 worth of nets and gear. Night-signals might have saved that loss, and the imminent risk of many lives. Such means are ready now.—On Friday the 7th March the warning-drum was hoisted all day at Plymouth. Saturday was so fine in appearance, that the caution was not appreciated, and mackerel-boats went to a distance as usual. That afternoon another signal was made to shew that a heavy southerly gale was coming soon. It was a beautiful afternoon. No one anticipated the sequel, except those who, spider-like, could "feel along the lines." Before midnight, there was a storm which lasted much of the next day. One of the boats was lost with eight men.—Our next instance shews that a foreign government has learned a lesson: the Prussian corvette *Amazon* was totally lost in a storm which was foretold along our eastern coast; and so struck were the Prussian authorities by the facts of that period, taken in connection with other known cases, that an official application was soon afterwards made to the Board of Trade for information, with the view of enabling a similar system to be organised in the Baltic, communicating, if possible, with England. We thus see that meteorological science, imperfect as it is, can be made practically useful in the preservation of life and property.

The balloon ascent mentioned in our last took place under very favourable circumstances. It occupied about two hours of the forenoon, and in that time the balloon travelled from Wolverhampton into Rutlandshire, and rose to a height of nearly five miles. The thermometric observations exhibit some remarkable results: at the surface of the earth, the temperature was 55°; at the height of half a mile, it was 45°; at a mile, it fell to 26°; but began to rise at two miles, and continued, until at four miles it touched 42°; it then fell rapidly down to 16°, the air being dry throughout the whole series of elevations. Mr Glaisher, it is said, behaved with the coolness of a veteran aeronaut, and ere long we may hope to have a complete scientific account of his results. Had it not been that the north-westerly wind was blowing the balloon towards the Wash, and making it dangerous to remain longer in the air, he would probably have ascended beyond five miles. Another attempt is, however, to be made when the wind is in the west, when, if possible, the balloon will be taken to a height of six miles. The two voyagers suffered but little from cold, but felt at times a sensation as of sea-sickness, with palpitation and difficulty of breathing. As regards the highest observations, we would recommend the Alpine Club to compare them with theirs taken on the mountain-top where the temperature is affected by local circumstances.

Almost every mail from India now brings news of fresh discoveries of natural resources in that country. The district of the Jyntea Hills, though within a comparatively easy distance of Calcutta, and comprising an extent of 43,000 square miles, was scarcely known until a few months ago, when surveyors visiting it were surprised to find a region of valleys and glens of wonderful fertility, and abounding in mineral wealth. As the population is not more than two millions, it

will be, however, some time before these valuable resources can be turned to profit. More roads and more people constitute the great want. With respect to intercommunications, certain sanguine individuals seeing that from one of our posts on the Upper Brahmapootra it is not more than three hundred miles to the Yangtschekiang, recommend the formation of a road between the two places; they behold already in anticipation a highway stretching from Calcutta to Shanghai.—Another Indian topic is the scheme for shortening the coast-voyages from one side to the other of the great peninsula, the special object being to find or make a passage through Adam's Bridge, from the Gulf of Manaar to Palk Strait, available at all seasons. If this were accomplished, vessels trading from Burmah to Madras and Bombay, and the reverse, would be saved all the distance which they at present have to sail round the south side of Ceylon. Even at the expense of blasting the traditional bridge, it would be desirable to establish a passage between the island and the mainland.

By a report lately published, we learn that the railways planned out in India will comprehend nearly 4700 miles, of which one half are finished, or in course of construction. The several works are actively carried on, as the importance of getting the whole of the lines into full traffic as soon as possible is properly recognised. In many districts, the principal highways are being connected with the railways by cross-roads, or light branches. In some instances the natives themselves have undertaken the task. The more roads, the more trade; and cotton, which costs from threepence to fourpence a ton per mile for mere transport by the native bullock-wagons, is now conveyed by rail at a penny or three-halfpence. It is worth remark, that while those railways are benefiting India, they are also promoting our home-trade, for we are told that up to the end of December last, the quantity of materials required for the works, shipped from England, amounted to 2,459,928 tons worth; in round numbers, £12,000,000 sterling. Three thousand and twelve ships were employed in the transport, of which number thirty-nine were lost. In October last, there were employed on the lines then open for traffic 34,329 persons, of whom 32,148 were natives of the country. It is to be hoped they will all learn lessons in good government.

A small book has recently made its appearance, which, to a certain class of readers, will be unusually interesting under present circumstances. It is on *The Chemical, Geological, and Meteorological Conditions involved in the successful Cultivation of Cotton,** and gives, besides, an account of cotton-growing in what are called the Cotton States of North America. The author of the book is Dr J. W. Mallet, Professor of Chemistry at Mobile, son of Mr Robert Mallet, a well-known F.R.S.; and one result of his elaborate investigation is to set aside the notion that cotton will grow 'anywhere' in a tropical climate. It appears, on the contrary, that 'cotton is a plant as limited and circumscribed by conditions of growth and seeding, as is the vine itself'; and Dr Mallet, having been supplied with abundant specimens of cotton soil from India, Algeria, and elsewhere, has made such a series of comparisons as leads to the conclusion that whatever advantages other countries may possess, there nevertheless remains a superiority to the cotton-growing states of North America. This arises from an abundance of the most suitable soil; and it is the question of soil which is treated of in the present volume; the other portions of the subject being reserved for future publication. Those who wish to know the results of careful analyses of cotton soil will

find them clearly set forth by Dr Mallet; he explains why it is that the cotton soil of Alabama produces such abundant crops. It is the fibre only that is carried away; all the rest is ploughed in; hence, as in the fibre from an acre of ground there is not more than 7½ pounds of mineral matter, the annual loss is but small, not half of what is lost by an acre of wheat at 25 bushels to the acre, which in the grain alone removes more than seventeen pounds of mineral matter. In his next volume, Dr Mallet will treat of 'the ash of the cotton plant as grown in America, and the climatal relations which there affect it.'

Ethnological questions are becoming more and more the subject of study: lecturers at the Royal Institution have entertained audiences with popular expositions about the brain and the skull. Dr Rolleston has discussed the subject from the anatomical point of view, and with respect to the differences between the brains of man and animals, and the effects of education in modifying the expression of features, he observes: 'All alike, when coldly and dispassionately viewed as concomitantly varying phenomena, lead us to hold that our higher and diviner life is not a mere result of the abundance of our convolutions. How harmony may have come to exist between them, our faculties are incompetent either to decide or to discover; but this shortcoming of man's intelligence affects neither his duties nor his hopes, neither his fears nor his aspirations.'—Mr Huxley's lecture on '*the fossil remains of man*' was an attempt to generalise on that interesting question—'Whether the distribution of cranial forms had been the same in all periods of the world's history; or whether the older races, in any locality, possessed a different cranial character from their successors?' As regards Northern and Western Europe, the answer to this question is given in the affirmative, for traces are found of peoples who used stone and bronze and iron implements before the time of the Romans, and a difference in their skulls has been noted. But, as in the native Australians of the present day—the purest of living races—it is possible to discover differences of skull as marked as between the ancient skulls, we see that no absolute conclusion can yet be arrived at. Meanwhile, we know that the skulls dug up in the peat-bogs of Denmark are those of a people who lived subsequently to the establishment of the present physical geography of that country; and that the Engis skull is of a date antecedent to the last great physical changes of Europe, the owner being a contemporary of the mammoth, the tichorine rhinoceros, the cave-bear, and the cave-hyæna, so that a vast gulf of time separates him from the men of Denmark. Another, the Neanderthal skull, of which the age cannot be exactly known, is the lowest and most ape-like in its characters of any human skull yet discovered. Mr Huxley's general conclusion is 'that the oldest known races of men differed comparatively but little in cranial conformation from those savage races now living, whom they seem to have resembled most in habits; and it may be concluded that these most ancient races at present known were at least as remote from the original stock of the human species as they are from us.' Mr Huxley is preparing a book in which this important question, illustrated by engravings, will be further considered. A contribution towards our wider knowledge of it has been lately published at Batavia, and sent to Europe for distribution, entitled *Eerste Bijdrage tot de Kennis der Schedels van Volken in den Indischen Archipel*, being the first part of a treatise on the skulls of different peoples in the Indian Archipelago. By the aid of lithographic engravings, the reader can make comparisons for himself.

Professor Ehrenberg of Berlin has laid before the Academy of Sciences of that city a brief statement concerning the fall of what is popularly described as 'blood-rain,' during a storm at Lyon in March last,

shewing that it is to be regarded as another instance of the fall of 'trade-wind dust' by which term the red sand from the interior of Africa is identified. This sand being carried along by currents at a high elevation, is caught at times in the conflict of elements, and falling with the rain-drops, has given rise to the popular error above noticed. Forty-three organic forms have been discovered in this red sand, which leave no room to doubt of its origin, and the whole phenomenon is a remarkable instance of the way in which modern science works by tracing effects to their causes.

WORSHIP.

WERE there no temples reared by mortal hands,
No altar-stone, no consecrated shrine,
No edifice for purposes divine,
To congregate the people of the lands,
Still would the flame of adoration's fire
Survive in human souls, and heavenward aspire.

What need of graceful arch and storied pane
To a poor suffering sinner on his knees?

The universe has greater things than these
Wherewith to decorate God's boundless fane,
And many voices of sublimer powers
To send unto the sky a grander psalm than ours.

With never-failing lamps the heavens are hung,
The mighty sun by fiery robes embraced;
The changeful moon, so pensive and so chaste;
The crowded stars in countless systems hung;
And meteors speeding with a fearful flight
Through all the realms of space, and clothed with
marvellous light.

Nay, there are sounds of worship that arise
From birds and trees, in many a sigh and song;
From winds and waters, hurrying along;
From restless seas, upheaving towards the skies;
From flowers, fruits, spices, incense-streams ascend
Up to the floating clouds, and there in sweetness
blend.

And yet 'tis fit that men should congregate,
To read, expound, and venerate the Page
Which shall extend from brightening age to age
The hopeful promise of a holier state;
'Tis well to meet, with souls that look above,
To form and propagate a brotherhood of love.

O for one simple creed, that all would share,
The mildest, purest, mercifullest, best,
That we might follow God's divine behest,
And worship Him in gladness everywhere;
Mingle without intolerance and pride,
And make His holy Word our counsellor and guide.

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